charge, to make as many designs as they required till one was obtained to meet their views.

The sub-committee, however, had made up their minds, and all Mr. Elliott could get was a recommendation to compete again. His original plans being "discovered," were returned to him. The fresh competition he declined; and in a long letter asserted that he has been exposed to persecution and loss of practice by certain clergymen, and can only conclude that they are acting in the spirit of a policy "openly advocated by clergymen of the new school, to exclude from employment all architects objecting to go freely in certain papistical bye ways, miscalled the 'old paths.'" And he asserts that "those architects who will not zealously further such views, are regularly hunted down by their organ, libelled without mercy, or the slightest regard to truth, and refused redress on the plea that it was all done *pour l'amour de Dieu*."

Mr. Elliott goes on to shew how it was attempted, in another case, to put him aside, "in favour of Mr. Butler, the builder employed by the chapter;" and says,—"It was this same Mr. Butler, one of the very last men I should have to fear as a competitor in my profession (in which he is an interloper), whom the 'cathedral party' and the chapter agents have for some time past been so unfairly attempting to force into my practice, with whom I had to compete on the occasion when the committee chose my design for the Training School. It was not considered expedient to appoint him at once after such a result, so it was resolved to have another competition, of which no intimation was conveyed to me. A very ingenious advertisement was drawn up, and an equally ingenious reply framed, for those architects who might be foolish enough to waste their time in competing, and write for particulars,—the substance of it being that, if they required information other than the advertisement afforded, they must find it out for themselves. These things savoured so strongly of an intended wrong, that they excited the suspicion and drew forth the comments of the editor of THE BUILDER. The competition over, the seventy or eighty unlucky architects are informed by another ingenious advertisement in THE BUILDER, that the committee have decided on the design marked "December, 1848;" and that the other parties may receive back their plans on application: of course the competitors must all be satisfied at this—the committee do not even yet know the name of the party who has got the prize: by the most extraordinary chance in the world, however, it turns out that "December, 1848," is *Mr. Joseph Butler*, the chapter's own man, the very party whom every one knowing any thing of the circumstances connected with the affair, knew it was intended should have it, by hook or by crook." We give the pith of this not uninstructive story just as it comes to us, and leave our readers to draw their own inferences.

ACCESS TO CHURCHES.

DURING my late rambles in the provinces, as often as I came to a large town and wished to explore its ecclesiological remains, so often had I to utter the invariable cry,—"Where are the church keys?" With hardly a single exception, I found the church locked up, the clergyman living at a distance, the clerks engaged in their secular occupation, and even the sextoness sometimes gone "a-washing." In a few places a board is stuck up, stating that the sextoness lives in such-or-such a place; but when the tired stranger has reached that locality, and inquired for this indescribable female, he is generally informed that she has changed her abode—perhaps to some distance. He then goes there, and finds she is "a-washing" at Mrs. Thompson's, or on some such woman's errand. On one occasion, having repaired to the advertised residence of a sextoness in a dark alley, I found her abode changed for one at some distance, where, having tracked her out with much difficulty, and mounted to some four-pair back, I found the poor female alone, ill in bed, the keys of the sacred edifice being entrusted to her sole care!

When recently in Bristol, on my applying to a sexton for admittance to a church, I was coolly informed by him that, being engaged in his secular occupation, "he could not attend to me, and without him no one might visit the church, lest a Prayer-book should be stolen!!" I urged my plea that, as a stranger, I might not again have an opportunity of visiting the edifice, but to no effect; and, at a great inconvenience, had again to wait on him at the hour he named.

But, Sir, should this be so? If this utilitarian age consider it sufficient to worship God collectively once a-week, is it right, is it decent, that our churches should be sealed up as hermetically as a prison—admittance hardly to be obtained—the keys found only after great delay—and when a hasty glance has been cast at the building, to be greeted, as I have been in a parochial church at Glastonbury, with the show-like expression, "We charges a shullin a head, zur!" If strangers found everywhere the courtesy displayed at St. Mary's Redcliffe, there would then be no need of complaint.

In making these observations, I have not urged, as I could have done, the obstacles daily thrown in the way of members of the architectural profession, when endeavouring to obtain some memorial of past art. That these impediments are numerous, no one can deny; that none is more unnecessarily vexatious than this hiding of church keys, every one will admit; and it is in the hope that your columns will be open to deprecate so unjustifiable a system, I have now ventured to address you.

F. C. W.

THE MARBLE ARCH IN ST. JAMES'S PARK.

THE danger is imminent; the palace advances to completion; soon the hoard will be removed, and the arch, the costly monument of George the Fourth, is doomed to demolition. Perhaps this structure is not very remarkable for beauty of design, or for any elaborate finish; it stands, however, a solitary instance of regal magnificence, being the only evidence in marble of an architectural portal in London, and with its bronze gates, which are good specimens of their kind, is not an unworthy memento of a monarch whose refinement of taste conduced not a little to the embellishment of the metropolis and the encouragement of art.

Is this *Arc de Triomphe* to be abated, and to be lost to the nation whose liberality furnished 70,000*l.* to its edification? For the sake of the capital which boasts but two arches we hope not.

By the way, says my boy who stands beside me, and to whom I refer sometimes as a mentor (for juvenile ideas have their value, albeit he is occasionally a tor-mentor), "Sir, you are mistaken, for there is Highgate Archway, and also the Bar where the arch civic authority receives majesty, and tenders the keys of the city,—Temple Bar."

Well, it is true we do possess these monuments: but still we hope that some site may be found whereon to reconstruct that which, if sold for its intrinsic worth, may not realize 2,000*l.*

Our city has a goodly range, and its locale is happily chosen. Piazzas and largos we have not, save the national fountains; yet there is no deficiency of positions where the restored marble arch might perpetuate the taste of its royal founder.

Could not some public contribution be got up to effect works of great public utility? We do know that St. Peter's was accomplished by such means, and that Peter's pence were collected for the object throughout all Christian Europe. We know that Mr. Cobden and Mr. Hudson had testimonials—colossal ones; and that now a monumental tribute is being collected for a mausoleum to Lord George Bentinck. Then why not, in this wealthy community, collect a fund to illustrate the greatest city of earth,—London? This might be done in shape of a poundage tax, to be levied within the range of the City and Liberties of London and Westminster.

The noble esplanade extending from St. Martin's Church through Pall Mall, now become the street of palaces,—what a glorious approach would that make to Hyde-park, if continued through Cleveland-row, and in a straight line to Buckingham Garden! At one end the spire and portico, at the other the open park: this access breaking out half way between the palace and the Triumphal Arch (from which it might be distant about 200 yards) would present the finest central avenue in Europe, and afford an approach, without a hill, to Hyde-park.

It would be necessary to purchase the corner house of St. James's-street, and six other houses in Cleveland-row, and also the insulated mansion facing the Green-park; this would open the space between Lord Ellesmere's new hall, the Duke of Sutherland's, and St. James's Palace; for the rest, the *débris* of the houses would form the road (about a quarter of a mile) over the flat park, and would effect a truly royal approach to Buckingham Palace.

At the point of junction I would place the marble arch. By this alteration, the noble mansions and palace would be worthy of this emporium of the world, and the gorgeous clubs of Pall Mall would add dignity to the central Boulevard, thus made light and ventilated by vital air.

At the same time, for the embellishment of the new palace and the St. James's-park, the old Mall behind St. James's might be broken up and clothed in shrub and verdure, only reserving the width between two ranges of the trees, now trampled and hardly vegetating there: that is, maintaining the present road through one alley (there are now four for royal use, and for the privileged classes, between the new palace and the Admiralty.

This would greatly enhance the beauty of St. James's-park, and form a noble vista from the Portal Royal; for there is a space of at least twelve acres of russet gravel at present wasted in road.

In the days of James and Charles this was the Mall, and, therefore, had its uses: but now the promenaders frequent Hyde-park: and the lugubrious trees of the old Mall give melancholy shade to only a few stragglers; for the wandering valetudinarian, nurses and children, range the pleasant sward and water-side within the rails: the external *parterre* is any thing but pleasing, and is avoided, as would be a desert in an Oasis.

QUONDAM.

LIME-ASH FLOORS FOR COTTAGES.

TWENTY years ago the almost universal cottage floor in Devonshire was produced by floating down an admixture of pounded lime (used tolerably fresh), smiths' ashes, and clean drift sand, in equal proportions: this was "run down" on a substratum of coarse gravel, brick bats, and lime core, about 6 inches in thickness, well saturated, then beaten to a level surface.

The lime floor should be 3 inches thick and well floated, and then "ironed down" (the more labour the better), and beginning at the further corner of the room, the man should gradually "work himself out" at the door, so as not to walk upon the new work. In a week it will become hard and durable. It is easily repaired when requisite.

If smiths' ashes cannot be got in sufficient quantities, one-half of brick dust may be mixed with them before they are finally chaffed up with the lime and sand.

JOHN BURGES WATSON.

Another correspondent says, that—In Somersetshire, artificial stone floors are constructed in the following manner:—The ground is prepared to receive the material: a concrete is then laid on, about two inches thick, consisting of one part lime to four of sand, well mixed together, taking care not to make it too wet. It is then well rammed with a flat punner, until it becomes sufficiently consolidated to receive the second coat; another layer is then laid on, the same thickness as before, and well rammed: care must be taken to keep the surface level. After a short period it will be sufficiently hardened for use. It is then rubbed over with common oil, which gives it the appearance of stone instead of sand. "Cupola" ashes are used to give the floor a dark appearance. I have seen floors made of this material in imitation of tessellated pavement,—the ashes and lime making the dark portions, and the sand and lime the light parts. This description of flooring costs there about 11*d.* per square yard.

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